Trade in America 38

CONSIDERATIONS

ON

MR. ATTORNEY'S BILL.

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]

12 March 1782

K Wallace (James)

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PROPOSITION

FOR A

B I L L

FOR THE

ESTABLISHMENT of PEACE

WITH

A M E R I C A.

By an OLD MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

Wiſdom is better than Weapons of War; but one Sinner deſtroyeth much Good.

Eccles. Chap. ix. Ver. 18.

LONDON.

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MDCCLXXXII.

CONSIDERATIONS

ON

Mr. ATTORNEY's BILL.

Wiſdom is better than Weapons of War; but one Sinner deſtroyeth much Good.

ECCLES. Chap. ix. Ver. 18.

WOULD to heaven I could hang a comet upon every letter of this motto, to warn my countrymen of the danger with which the meaſures of Miniſters are pregnant. The Attorney-General's Bill to eſtabliſh peace, as it is plauſibly called, with America, appears to my judgment, to be extremely impolitic, and totally inadequate to the purpoſe for which it is intended, or pretended. Mr. Wallace

Wallace may be a very good lawyer, but lawyers in general make very indifferent politicians. There was a time, and it is not long ſince, when the preſent Speaker diſapproved of lawyers becoming politicians. Upon the late Mr. Serjeant Glynn's motion reſpecting the Attorney-General's power and practice of filing informations *ex officio*, Mr. Cornwall ſaid, he diſliked ſeeing any of thoſe perſons who are cloathed with the robe of magiſtracy, turning politicians. This alluſion was to Lord Mansfield; his Lordſhip's conduct in the proſecution of Junius's letter, being the ſubject of that part of the debate. Lord Mulgrave was of the ſame opinion.

On the preſent occaſion, ſo immenſely important, *nullius addictus jurare in verba magiſtri:* I ſhall pin my faith upon the *dictum* of no lawyer in the univerſe; and when his *ipſe dixit* is authoritatively urged, I ſhall be at no pains to repreſs my ſuſpicions, that his reaſons are concealed, becauſe if fairly produced and held up

up to the light, many flaws in them would be diſcovered by a careful examiner. I have lived long enough to remember many opinions of court lawyers, upon American affairs; they have been all ſtrongly marked with the ſame character; they have been generally very ſententious; and the ſame obſervation may be applied to them all. They have all declared that to be *legal*, which the Miniſter for the time being has deemed to be *expedient*. Or, if the expediency ſhould not be legal by any of the ſtatutes from Henry the VIIIth to the preſent time, they are ready to draw up, and bring in a bill to *make* it legal.

Has not the King the power of making peace, as well as declaring war? — Parliament may withhold ſupplies for the one, and diſapprove of the other; but the power itſelf will remain; and can want no aſſiſtance. On ſome emergencies the King, by the conſtitution, hath an abſolute power to provide for the ſafety of the State; to take care, like a Roman

man Dictator, *ne quid detrimenti capiat reſpublica*. This power is not annexed to the Sovereign by any expreſs law; it neceſſarily reſults from the end and nature of government. The bringing in a bill to eſtabliſh peace with America, looks like eſtabliſhing ſome *new* and *aſſumed* power. "Beſides, ſays the author of the letter on General Warrants, an act of Parliament newly made, is not ſo venerable in the eyes of the world, or ſo ſecure againſt future alterations, as the old common law of the land, which has been from time immemorial, the inheritance of every Engliſhman, and is on account of its antiquity, held, as it were ſacred in every man's mind."

Without ſearching deeper into the intentions of Miniſters, than a conſtitutional examination of their conduct will juſtify, it may, with the ſtricteſt propriety, be ſaid, that whether they mean peace or war, this is no time for ſuch a bill. A bill is to be read ſix times

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in the two Houſes of Parliament; to be debated in the Houſes, and in the Committees. All the world knows its contents; and before the Ambaſſadors can act under it, the enemy are acquainted with their powers. The Congreſs had a copy of the bills appointing Commiſſioners, &c. many weeks before the Commiſſioners landed in America. What was the conſequence of thus developing the arcana of State? — ridicule and contempt; not only in America, but in every part of Europe. The late Lord Temple ſaid, "This is a time to *act*, and not to *talk*." And ſince that noble Lord's death, Lord Mansfield has quoted the words in the Houſe of Lords, and given to them his warmeſt approbation. It is the faſhion to honour the dead with compliments. But why was not that noble Lord liſtened to, when alive? His friends, as well as thoſe of Lord Chatham, who muſt be ſuppoſed to be beſt acquainted with their principles and ſentiments, are not conſulted. If they were, it is poſſible, that

upon the preſent bill moved for by the Attorney-General, they might anſwer with a repetition of the words, "That this is a time to *act*, and not to *talk*."

Terms, or traits, or even principles of peace, are novel things to be held out by the *authority* of Parliament, prior to the negotiation, or even the appointment of Ambaſſadors. The proceedings of Parliament are not now, as they were in the time of the Right Hon. Arthur Onſlow. They are made public. Perhaps it is conſtitutional that they ſhould be made public. I do not mean to controvert the point, becauſe I know there is much to be ſaid on both ſides. But if this is not a time to encreaſe the number of diſputes upon ſpeculative points, it will at leaſt be admitted on all ſides, that it is a time when *ſecreſy* is, if poſſible, more neceſſary than ever; particularly and eſpecially, in all points, powers and matters of negotiation. Parliament is therefore a very improper place to open the overtures

tures of peace. Parliament is to give judgment, but Miniſters are to negociate. It is the duty of the King's ſervants to *offer* peace. It would be a degradation of the country, if Parliament were to offer peace. To put the thing upon Parliament is to ſcreen and preſerve the Miniſter; who will not do any thing without having Parliament firſt pledged and committed in ſupport of his meaſure. It is the new ſyſtem of politics, begun in the preſent reign, to make Parliament *firſt* authorize the thing, and the Miniſter afterwards to carry it into execution. Thus the *deſign* and the *meaſure* become known to the enemy, before the execution is attempted; and therefore without any extraordinary ſagacity in the enemy, they are rendered abortive, and totally fruſtrated.

The anſwer of the Congreſs to the Commiſſioners, reduced the *ſine qua non* of peace to this alternative, *viz.*

" An explicit acknowledgment of the In-
" dependence of theſe States. Or,
" Withdraw your fleets and armies."

To the firſt, the Commiſſioners offered every thing, but the *name*.

To the laſt, they ſaid they had no power.

Let us bring the matter to the *preſent* day; and aſk what is it our intereſt *now* to do? It will require no great ſkill in mathematics, or arithmetic, to determine, after a ſhort look on our ſurrounding enemies, and the unqueſtionable imbecility of our Miniſters, which of the two we ought to adopt. Lord Chatham need not come from the dead to tell us *again*, that we ought to withdraw our troops. The neceſſity is obvious. There has been ſuperlative conviction.—Needs there a bill, then, to empower the King to withdraw the troops? Certainly not. For what purpoſe is the bill intended?—I know not. But am certain, that no bill is neceſſary to ſupport, or authoriſe the purſuit of the *true* intereſt of the country. A bill can do no good; it may do much harm. The preamble muſt ſay ſome-

thing

thing, and the bill muſt ſay ſomething; and whatever they ſay, will be too much. The debate, and God forbid ſuch a bill ſhould paſs without debate, will, if poſſible, be more intereſting to the enemy, than to ourſelves. The language and ſentiments of thoſe, who are able and adequate to the arduous duty of the State; the language and views of Miniſters, if they can be ſaid to have any views beyond the daily routine of their offices, muſt, at this time, be exceedingly and particularly acceptable, at all foreign Courts.

The author of the letter to the Right Hon. Mr. Jenkinſon, has put the axis of peace with America, in its true centre. I will tranſcribe two paragraphs from that celebrated letter, becauſe our intereſts, and line of conduct to be purſued, with regard to America, are laid down ſo clearly, it would be preſumption to attempt a better explanation, or to offer better advice.

"It has been a misfortune to this country, that many well meaning gentlemen did not, when the war commenced, underſtand the true connection between Great Britain and America. They adopted certain notions of power; which, with reſpect to America, would have been as impolitic in the execution, as they have been impracticable in the attainment. Trade alone was our proper connection; and ſo long as the Americans went on with agriculture, and we with manufactures, both countries were flouriſhing; and never was any connection between nations ſo happily and by nature ſo mutually formed for each other's benefit. While we ſent them plough-ſhares, protected their trade, and let alone their internal police, they were our friends. We went on in manufacturing, and they in cultivating. A dear bought experience has ſhewn us the miſchiefs, which an interruption of that happineſs has occaſioned. The arguments of thoſe noblemen and gentlemen, who deprecated the vengeance

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of Miniſters, and ſolicited the conſideration of every meaſure, to avoid that of war, reflect a luſtre upon their characters, and inſpire a confidence in their judgments, which time will not tarniſh or eraſe. If a tax of three-pence per pound upon tea, was a matter worth reſiſting, and America could be brought to unite againſt that paltry ſum, is it not *more* probable that the *greater* ſum intended to have been levied by the Stamp Act, would have created the like reſiſtance? There was wiſdom in foreſeeing the danger, and there was virtue in preventing it. If the policy which dictated the repeal of the Stamp Act, had been continued, Great Britain and America, would at this day, have been a moſt happy, united, and flouriſhing people. By adhering to that policy in one caſe, and by rejecting it in another, which was exactly ſimilar, we have given it a FAIR TRIAL; and may pronounce what woeful experience will not now ſuffer to be called adulation, that the ſupporters of that policy were the trueſt friends to Great Britain;

to

to that union and reciprocity of intereſts which gave dignity to our Sovereign in the eyes of all the princes of Europe, and magnanimity to our councils by a thorough knowledge of the commercial fountains from which our ſtrength and reſources flowed.

" I will quit this diſagreeable and melancholy ſubject, with moſt earneſtly entreating you as chairman, maſter, head, or principal of the Efficient Council, not to make another campaign in America.—*Abandon the American war.—Say nothing more about it; but withdraw the troops*, and employ them elſewhere. *Make no peace with America only. Leave all diſcuſſion with America, to the period of a general peace. The ſeparate attempt would be degrading; and would be paying to America a greater compliment than you intend.*" See pages 45, 46, and 47.

In one of the Boſton newſpapers, printed during the time that the Commiſſioners were

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in America, was inſerted the following intereſting paper:

Boſton, Auguſt 7. "Nothing can be of greater moment to the new-born nation of America, in the negociations for peace, than a proper care of the fiſhery. It is particularly the life of the New England States; and we can no more do without it, than our brethren at the ſouthward can without rice, indigo, tobacco, and flour. But the importance of the fiſhery is not confined and partial; it is general, and extends to all the States: for what is this nation without a navy? What are ſhips without men? And what nurſery of ſeamen is comparable to an extended fiſhery? It may therefore be relied on, that a branch of traffic ſo abſolutely neceſſary to ſome States, and ſo eſſential to the grandeur and ſecurity of all, will be particularly attended to by thoſe who have hitherto ſo glorioufly conducted us thro' the war. Even thoſe among us, who are moſt diſpoſed to peace, ſcruple not to ſay, we had

better continue the war indefinitely, and to the laſt extremity, than not ſecure the fiſhery to the extent we have always enjoyed it. France, and all the European powers who mean to trade with us, are deeply intereſted in this point. For the means of remittance, is the means of trade, and without the fiſhery, our commerce with Europe will be much confined.

" Thoſe European powers who have made the greateſt figure at ſea, have owed their ſuperiority to their fiſheries. Holland, without having any thing from her lands to export, has eſtabliſhed herſelf as one of the moſt important commercial powers, in a great means, by immenſe fiſheries. Britain, by improving her fiſheries on her own coaſts, and in other parts, has long claimed to be miſtreſs of the ſeas. France was later in attending to this great ſource of power and wealth, and could not conteſt the pre-eminence of Britain on the water, till her ſubjects became fiſhermen.

After

After that, her contentions with Britain, on what was called Britain's own element, were reſpectable.

" Whatever is obtained from the water, is as ſo much clear gain. The preparations for curing it, employ many hands on ſhore, and the perſons engaged in procuring it, are a ſource of ſtrength inconceivable, and not interfering with the culture of the field. They will man our fleets, and fight our battles at a diſtance from our dwellings, and, having put us in ſecurity, will return again to their employ, and be uſeful in adding to the riches and ſtrength of the country they protected.

" The ſituation of this country makes the fiſheries eſpecially important. The ſouthern and middle States have ſtaple commodities, which other nations require. Their indigo, rice, tobacco, hemp, and flour, are and will be commanding articles of export. The eaſtern States depend on the fiſheries for the moſt

valuable part of their foreign trade. Nature ſeems to have denied them, as it has other northern countries, even bread for their ſupport from the land, that they might be driven to improve the advantages of the ſea. This they have wiſely obſerved; and have been ever ſatisfied to depend on the other States for flour and bread, rather than employ their people in the more laborious and leſs promiſing buſineſs of tillage. This good policy they will purſue. Hence the fiſhery will form not only the grand ſecurity of theſe States againſt foreign powers, but be the great means of connecting in intereſt and cementing them to each other. The eaſtern States, which from their ſituation will more naturally, and from their circumſtances more neceſſarily, be driven to the fiſheries, will depend on their ſouthern neighbours for proviſions for their fiſhermen, their circuitous voyages and home conſumption, and for tar and hemp, and iron for their veſſels, and the whole

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union will feel much of its ſecurity and ſtrength in them.

" Beſides, the intereſt which theſe States themſelves have to enjoy the free right of the fiſhery, ſomething is certainly due to our preſent and future allies in Europe, and to the principles on which we have profeſſed to conduct the preſent conteſt. France, Spain, and ſeveral other nations in Europe, depend much on the American fiſhery. It is clearly their intereſt, not barely with a view to leſſen the importance of the Britiſh nation, but for their own more immediate advantage, that ſo great a branch of commerce and ſtrength ſhould not be left confined. It is their intereſt to take the fiſh they conſume from the Americans, becauſe the Americans can ſupply cheaper, and by ſupplying them with fiſh will be enabled and induced to take more of their goods in return. France has, it is true, been able, in ſome meaſure, to ſupply her own demands for this article, and it has been

ſuggeſted

ſuggeſted that ſhe can have no inducement to be with us in a queſtion of this nature. It is otherwiſe. As Great-Britain has determind to make us as little uſeful to France as poſſible, by ravaging, burning and deſtroying — ſhe herſelf points out the great intereſt which France, in common with other nations, has in terminating this war on terms only which will leave us in a ſituation of becoming uſeful and powerful allies. The French fiſhery is reſtricted and embarraſed. Britain has, in a great meaſure, made her own terms on the Banks. If the American right is clearly aſcertained, France will not, from this circumſtance, be in the leaſt injured; but ſhe may derive opportunities and advantages. France has ſcarcely ever more than ſupplied her own wants of fiſh. The Americans, in ſupplying other people, will not therefore interfere with her intereſt. The fiſh made by the French is neceſſarily of an inferior nature, becauſe they have not the full advantages for curing the beſt. The Ameri-

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cans have thoſe advantages, and therefore will be able to furniſh the beſt.

" This moſt important object is, doubtleſs, to the United States, one of the moſt valuable jewels we have been contending for. It is the birthright of this country—annexed and appertaining to it by the diſpoſition of Heaven. Great-Britain's claim to the dominion of the ſeas, muſt be clearly aſcertained as to this branch of it. Her early poſſeſſions of the fiſhery, and any idea ſhe may entertain that the ſhare we have hitherto had therein was held under her protection and right, and as her ſubjects, muſt be clearly explained in the firſt negociation."

There is a notion, I know not whence it ariſes, that Mr. Laurens has authority to treat of peace with Great Britain, for America *ſeparately*. This ſeems to me to be one of thoſe idle reports, which are always invented at the ſeaſon, to ſerve the omnium. It is not probable

bable that the man who ſuffered his diſpatches to be taken, will be truſted with the negociation of peace. It does not appear that the Congreſs held him in the higheſt eſtimation, when they refuſed to exchange Lord Cornwallis for him. As ſoon would they truſt his friend Mr. Ralph Izard. They are not the men. When peace is on the tapis, it muſt be with Mr. John Adams. He is the American Miniſter in Europe, whenever the buſineſs of peace is entered upon. And however we may flatter ourſelves, that a *ſeparate* peace can be made with America, and that America will be *neuter*, while we revenge ourſelves on the Houſe of Bourbon; it is a proſpect that appears to me, to be all deluſion. America has entered into a treaty of *alliance* with France, and we have commenced a war with France upon that account.—Will a young man, at ſetting out in life, break his *firſt* engagement? Will America, a young nation, break her *firſt* faith?—I am not ſo green in politics, *to lay ſuch flattering unction to my ſoul.*

We

We ought to abandon the American war, or direct our whole force to it. There is no medium. Lord Chatham aſked very emphatically, "Why halt between two extremes, "where there is a middle path." There is no other alternative. A war of poſts in America, would be abſurd, futile, and puerile. It would be continuing all the eſtabliſhment of expence, without even affecting the promiſe of an advantage. Lord Chatham ſaid, withdraw the troops; and every wiſe man has repeated the ſame. The war in Europe, and the war on the continent of America, are diſtinct objects. We are not equal to both. The Houſe of Commons have at length done wiſely, and virtuouſly. They have ſaid, "Abandon the American war." In this inſtance they have echoed the voice of their conſtituents. For ſeveral months paſt, there has not been a man in Great Britain, independent of Miniſters, who has not been ready to declare it as his opinion, *that the war in America ought to be abandoned.*

In the *United State's Magazine, for March, printed at Philadelphia, by Francis Bailey*, there are the two following paragraphs, which are not unworthy of the reader's notice:

" Our Independence will naturally tend to fill our country with inhabitants. Where life, liberty, and property, are well ſecured, and where land is eaſily and cheaply obtained, the natural encreaſe of people will exceed all European calculations. The population of this country has heretofore been very rapid; but it is worthy of obſervation, that it has varied more or leſs, in proportion to the degrees of liberty that were granted to the different provinces. Pennſylvania and New England, though inferior in ſoil, being bleſt originally with the moſt free forms of government, have outſtripped others in the encreaſe of their inhabitants. Hence I infer, that as we are all now completely free and independent, we ſhall populate much faſter than we ever have done.

" Britain

"Britain will eventually loſe leſs by our Independence, than is commonly ſuppoſed. The Miniſtry will be cured of their luſt of domination, and will be deprived of influence, and the means of corruption. While ſhe had a monopoly of our trade, it encouraged idleneſs and extravagance in her manufacturers; becauſe they were ſure of a market for their goods, though dear and ill made. But as Independence will beſtow our commerce upon thoſe who moſt deſerve it, this will be the means of introducing frugality and induſtry among her labouring poor. Our population will be ſo much the more rapid for our free governments, that in my opinion, that part of our trade which will fall to the ſhare of Great Britain, upon a general peace, will be ſo much encreaſed, as to be more to her advantage than a monopoly of the whole."

There is a ſingular *fact* ſtated in Gee's treatiſe upon trade, (Lord Nugent's, as well as the late Alderman Beckford's favourite

book, who have often quoted it in the Houſe of Commons) which ſhews that, with regard to Carolina in particular, it could be neither for the intereſt of Great Britain nor America, to make a *monopoly* of the ſtaple commodity of that province, which is rice. The whole iſland of Great Britain did not annually conſume more than five thouſand barrels, and yet it was one of the enumerated articles. The charge on unloading, re-loading, and ſhifting every caſk, owing to this enumeration, was immenſe; and could ſerve no purpoſe whatever, except to give jobs to coopers and wharfingers.

" The enumeration was obtained by a captain (Cole) of a ſhip employed by a company then trading to Carolina; for ſeveral ſhips going from England thither, and purchaſing rice for Portugal, prevented the aforeſaid captain of a loading. Upon his coming home, he poſſeſſed a member of Parliament, Mr. Lowndes, (who was frequently employed to prepare bills) with an opinion, that carrying rice directly to Portugal was a prejudice to the trade of England,

land, and privately got a clauſe into an act 3, 4, Q. Anne, (act for continuing the duty on low wines, coffee, tea, &c.) to make it an ennumerated commodity, by which means ſecured a freight to himſelf, but proved a vaſt loſs to the nation; and that is not ſuppoſed to be one-third part of what it might have been by this time. Now this could not have happened, if the gentleman who brought in that clauſe, had underſtood the nature and circulation of trade; he would then have known, that it is much more the intereſt of the Engliſh merchant to ſell his rice in Portugal, and have the money remitted thence, than it is to have it brought to England, and afterwards ſhipped to Holland, Hamburgh, or Portugal; for the difference in the freight and charges is at leaſt fifty per cent." (See pages 52 and 53, of the edition, now ſold by J. Debrett.)

In a late oration ſpoken before a public aſſembly in Carolina, by David Ramſay, M. D. upon

upon the advantages of Independence, the orator ſays, "We are the firſt people in the world, who have had it in their power to chooſe their own form of government. Conſtitutions were forced on all other nations, by the will of their conquerors; or they were formed by accident, caprice, or the over-bearing influence of prevailing parties, or particular perſons. But, happily for us, the bands of Britiſh government were diſſolved at a time when no rank above that of freemen, exiſted amongſt us, and when we were in a capacity to chooſe for ourſelves among the various forms of government, and to adopt that which beſt ſuited our country and people. Our deliberations on this occaſion, were not directed by the over-grown authority of a conquering General, or the ambition of an aſpiring nobility, but by the pole-ſtar of public good, inducing us to prefer thoſe forms that would moſt effectually ſecure the greateſt portion of political happineſs to the greateſt number of people. We had the example of all ages for our inſtruction,

ſtruction, and many among us were well acquainted with the cauſes of proſperity and miſery in other governments. The antients, unacquainted with the preſent mode of taking the ſenſe of the people by repreſentatives, were too apt, in their public meetings, to run into diſorder and confuſion. The diſtinction of Patricians and Plebians laid the foundation of perpetual diſcord in the Roman Commonwealth. If the free States of Greece had been under the controul of a common ſuperintending power, ſimilar to our Continental Congreſs, they could have peaceably decided their diſputes, and probably would have preſerved their freedom and importance to the preſent day. Their council of Amphyctions, in ſome things, reſembled our Congreſs, but their powers were too limited. Happily for us, warned by experience, we have guarded againſt all theſe evils. In monarchies, favour is the ſource of preferment; but in our new forms of government, no one can command the

the ſuffrages of the people, unleſs by his ſuperior merit and capacity. No artificial diſtinction of ranks has been ſuffered to take place amongſt us. We are in poſſeſſion of conſtitutions that contain in them the excellencies of all forms of government, free from the inconveniences of each; and in a word, we bid fair to be the happieſt and freeſt people in the world for ages yet to come."

Will not every wiſe and diſpaſſionate man think it is madneſs to ſend, or to leave an army of Britiſh ſoldiers amongſt ſuch nations, who think they have gained ſuch great advantages, by ſeparating from us? Will any armies we can ſend, oblige them to abandon, forego, or even poſtpone the reſolution of maintaining, at every hazard, ſuch favourite ideas? The man who thinks in the affimative, knows nothing of either country, nor of human nature.

It appears, ſays Herodotus, not from one inſtance only, but from all hiſtory, how noble is the virtue of liberty; ſo the Athenians, when under the tyranny of Piſiſtratus, were of no excellency in war, but when they had expelled the tyrants, they became the firſt in martial proweſs. While the ſun of liberty ſhone on Thebes, it diſpelled even the fogs of Bœotia, and ripened into greatneſs of ſoul a Pelopidas, an Epaminondas, and a Pindar; and if in five hundred years of ſlavery, a Stilico and a Beliſarius did ariſe in that Italy, "fertile of heroes while free," they ſerve but to deepen the horrors of tyranny; the one having been aſſaſſinated by his jealous Emperor, the other compelled by the ungrateful tyrant, to beg his bread through the realms his valour ſaved. During the three centuries from the death of Piſiſtratus, to the time of Alexander, at what a glorious height in arts and arms did the Athenians, under the happy influence of liberty, arrive; but how few were

the years of ſlavery, which reduced them to weakneſs, miſery, and contempt. From the birth of Roman liberty at the expulſion of the Tarquins, to its total extinction by the death of Brutus, was little more than five hundred years. In this period, what an illuſtrious train of heroes did this free ſpirit produce, the Fabii, Fabricii, Decii, Metelli, Scipiones, Æmelii, and others. Cato has told us what were the characteriſtics of this potent republic. *Domi induſtria foris juſtum imperium, animus in conſulendo liber neque delicto neque lubidini obnoxius.* Such was the virtue, order, and ſtability, which liberty produced; ſuch vital energy did it infuſe through the whole body of the ſtate, that it baffled, while it continued, every attempt to overthrow it; ſtood the aſſaults of thoſe dreadful foes Hannibal and Pyrrhus.—How ſhall I view the ſad reverſe which ſlavery produced, without tears and deteſtation! Even ſo early as the reign of Auguſtus, ſays Blackwell in his memoirs

moirs of that monarch's court, "Idleneſs, "trifling amuſements, tumblers, dancers, "races, and wild beaſts, occupied the minds "of thoſe who had been wont to think of "honours, triumphs, and laborious virtues." The Roman name was now no more. *Victor gentium populus, et donare regna conſuetus*, ſays Florus. The Fabricii and Catones were no more. No more that hardy and incorruptible virtue, that called a Cincinnatus from the plough, *ſi quidem aranti lucio quintio Cincinnato nuntiatum eſt eum dictatorum eſſe factum*, ſays Cicero. The epicurean Apicii and Naſideini filled their places. Feaſts and debauchery were ſubſtituted for arts and arms. Horace ſays,

Fœcunda culpæ ſæcula, nuptias
Primùm inquinavere, et genus, et domus:
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam, populumque fluxit.

Lib: iii. *Car*. 6.

The Roman people, by their own luxuries, ſoon became weak and miſerable; and loſing their own power, they were oppreſſed and

goaded by thoſe monſters, Tiberius, Nero, Caligula, Commodus, Caracalla, and Domitian. The empire was harraſſed by perpetual contentions, until after a few miſerable centuries it was overturned by Barbarians.

Let us apply this ſketch of hiſtory to ourſelves, and aſk if there is no analogy?

That we may ſecure the bleſſing of liberty, and learn the greatneſs of its worth, let me, with all reſpect, earneſtly beg leave to recommend to my countrymen, eſpecially the younger part, a thorough acquaintance with thoſe records of illuſtrious liberty, the hiſtories of Greece and Rome; from whence they will imbibe a juſt hatred of tyranny, and zeal for freedom. Let them ſtudy well the godlike actions of thoſe heroes and patriots, whoſe lives are delivered down to us by Plutarch, that they may be inſpired with a glorious emulation of thoſe virtues which have immortalized their names. Let them

examine

examine thoroughly and particularly into our own hiſtory and conſtitution, that they may well underſtand its force, form, and excellence; the methods which bad Princes and wicked Miniſters have taken to deſtroy it, and by what means it has been preſerved. Theſe things ſhould be thoroughly conſidered, we ſhould entertain one another frequently in converſation on theſe ſubjects, that we may implant in ourſelves a lively ſenſe of liberty and law; and infuſe into all around us, a generous love for their country, and the Engliſh conſtitution. Such a love as dictated the following ſpeech, which ought to enroll the ſpeaker in that ſacred liſt of patriots, where Timoleon, Cato, Brutus, Caſſius, and Naſſau ſhine for ever. It is the ſpeech of Sir William Wallace to Bruce, who ſolicited him to give up the defence of his country, in order to gain King Edward's favour. *Vos*, ſaid the indignant hero, *quibus portior eſt turpis cum ſecuritate ſervitus*,

vitus, quam honeſta, cum periculo, libertas; iſtam, quam magni eſtimatis, fortunam amplectameni. Ego in patria ſæpe defenſa liber et libens morear; nec me prius ejus caritas quam vita relinquet. Vide Buchannan.

I beg pardon for this apoſtrophe, and will return to the ſubject of theſe pages.

In whatever light we view the American diſpute, whether we conſider ourſelves as friends to the war, or enemies to the principle of it, there is one point upon which I believe every perſon in Great Britain is agreed; which is, that all our defeats, misfortunes, and diſgraces, have been owing to the miſmanagement of the navy. This is an axiom ſo true, that none but the retainers of the Admiralty have attempted to deny it. The iſlands in the Weſt Indies have been loſt owing to the miſmanagement of the navy. The loſs of Minorca

is

is to be aſcribed to the ſame cauſe. There have been opportunities and time ſufficient or the relief of Minorca. If any man can be hardy enough to aſſert the contrary, let him point out the ſervices in which the fleet has been employed ſince the Duc de Crillon landed upon the iſland, which was about the middle of Auguſt laſt. This iſland was the ſiſter protectreſs of our Italian and Turkey trade. The Houſe of Bourbon has now entire poſſeſſion of the empire of the Mediteranean. The harbour of St. Philip was an admirable aſylum to our ſhips of war and trade. "*Ce port eſt un des plus beaux de l' Europe,*" ſays a French engineer, in a plan of the port, dedicated ſome time ago to Count de Maurepas. If any man had ſaid ſix months ago, that Minorca would change its maſter, without ſurprize, or ſtratagem, by the ſlow advances of the dull Spaniard, with all the opportunities and means that heart could wiſh

with to ſend relief, he would have been deemed an enthuſiaſt, a violater of the peace, an enemy to his country, and a ſpy for France or Spain.

When Minorca was taken the laſt war, among the great number of addreſſes which were preſented to the late King upon that occaſion, was the following from the County Palatine of Cheſter, which deſerves to be re-peruſed at the preſent hour.

" To the King's moſt Excellent Majeſty,

" We your Majeſty's moſt dutiful and loyal ſubjects, the high ſheriff, grand jury, gentlemen, and freeholders of the county palatine of Cheſter, moſt humbly beg leave, at this very extraordinary juncture, to addreſs your ſacred perſon with hearts firmly attached to the preſervation of your Majeſty's government, and the liberties of our country: which we apprehend to be ſo cloſely

connected,

connected, that they muſt mutually depend on the exiſtence of each other.

" Conſcious, therefore, of your Majeſty's wonted juſtice and paternal affection for your people, we dutifully hope, that your Majeſty will kindly, and duly, conſider the preſent unhappy ſituation of theſe once flouriſhing kingdoms.

" We are too apprehenſive, from many alarming circumſtances, that the ſupplies, ſo chearfully and liberally given, for the ſupport of your Majeſty's Britiſh dominions, have been *fatally miſapplied.*

" We reflect, with the utmoſt concern and abhorrence, *that our fleets and armies have been rendered ineffectual by ignorance, cowardice, or treachery:* That our American plantations, *by which our trade principally flouriſhes,* are ſhamefully torn from us, notwithſtanding

the large ſums allowed for their defence: And that Minorca, once glorioufly acquired, and ſince, no leſs valiantly defended; an iſland ſo eſſential to our commerce, and a jewel ſo conſpicuous in your Majeſty's crown, *has been unaccountably abandoned*, to the perpetual diſgrace of this nation and your Majeſty's glory, to our perfidious enemy; an enemy we have hitherto *never feared*, but have often humbled.

" Our concern naturally increaſes when we reflect farther, *that the taxes are grievous, the national debt immenſe; that our trade daily leſſens, though they multiply*; by which, we fear, we may be too ſoon diſabled from raiſing the neceſſary ſupplies for the ſupport of your Majeſty's and our country's rights.

" Theſe melancholy reflections fill us with fear and amazement; and our allegiance to your Majeſty, and love of our native country, once the arbitreſs of *Europe*, induce us to unboſom our thoughts to your royal conſideration;

tion; not doubting redreſs of our grievances from a King who loves to be eſteemed the father of his people.

" Permit us therefore, moſt humbly to repreſent to your Majeſty, the abſolute neceſſity of having our natural guards, a well-regulated militia, *upon the footing of the Engliſh conſtitution:* and we likewiſe moſt humbly hope, from your Majeſty's known juſtice and goodneſs, that you will be pleaſed to direct ſuch a ſpeedy and ſtrict enquiry into the conduct of all thoſe who, when it was in their power, did not prevent our loſſes; but have conduced, or conſpired, to overwhelm this nation, and your Majeſty's crown, with reproach and diſhonour; that they may receive their due puniſhment, which they ſo juſtly deſerve."

Preſented by Samuel Egerton, and Thomas Cholmondeley, Eſqrs. in October, 1756.

If it was the reſolution and determination of his Majeſty's *confidential* ſervants, to *create cauſe for*, and to *make* war on America, as hath been very ably ſet forth in a late tract, entitled, *An Addreſs to the Interior Cabinet*, that war ought to have been a naval one: firſt, becauſe it was moſt conſiſtent with the ſtrength and genius of our country; and next, becauſe it was moſt injurious to the intended enemy. France could have given no aſſiſtance to America, while we were ſuperior at ſea. The French iſlands would have ſuffered in common with our own, in the want of ſupplies from North America. But a war upon the continent of America, to be carried on by Great Britain, at three thouſand miles diſtance, is contrary to every principle of common ſenſe, and even to a ſchool-boy's knowledge of geography. It was teaching the inhabitants the ſcience of war, and ſcattering our money all over the country. A war upon the trade of the Americans, and thereby cutting off their communication with all nations but our own,

and

and between alſo their own States, except by land, was our true policy. The ſea is our proper element for war. But if ever we have the misfortune to be diſgraced by a Tory Cabinet, who prefer the army to the navy, becauſe they ſuppoſe the army more ready, more uſeful and neceſſary to enforce their edicts, for acts of parliament they conſider as differing only in name, they will neglect the navy in time of peace, which is the true and proper ſeaſon to make every preparation for war, as the ſureſt means of preſerving peace; they will ſelect a debilitated debauchee for their naval miniſter, whoſe age ſecures him from the expectation of intellectual ability, or the exertion of corporeal activity; and beſtowing all their attention to, and expending immenſe ſums on the parade and ſhew of the ſoldiers, their accoutrements, cloaths, and buttons; the navy, which is the natural bulwark and defence of the iſland, of the property of its inhabitants, and the dependencies, will become neglected, rot, and decreaſe; and when

the

the time of war arrives, the navy is found to be incompetent and inadequate to the ſervice. The nation has been deceived by Miniſters, who have been attending to trifles inſtead of eſſentials; who inſtead of attending to the ſtrength of the country, have been amuſing the people with gew-gaws, with reviews and ſham fights upon Wimbledon Common and Blackheath; expending more money in three years in nonſenſe, than would have built thirty ſhips of the line, or have kept ten thouſand ſeamen in pay for ſeven years.

The effect of Sir George Collier's expedition againſt Penobſcot, is felt in America to this day. That ſingle fact ſhews beyond any other in the American war, the importance of our navy, and the ſervice it might have performed in that war, if that war had been a naval one. When the garriſon of Halifax was imprudently weakened to make a ſettlement at Penobſcot, in an uncleared country,

country, for no purpoſe whatever, except to invite the enemy to a ſcene of action; where, by land, we had every thing to loſe, and nothing to gain, had not the zeal of Sir George Collier, who at the hazard of his life quitted a ſick chamber, and ſailed inſtantly to its relief, another general officer muſt have been made priſoner in America; for the day after Sir George's arrival in the bay of Penobſcot, was the day which had been fixed upon by the Americans, to make a general aſſault upon the garriſon, by ſea and land. Nothing but Sir George's exertion ſaved the place: and he deſtroyed the whole American naval force which was collected there—a loſs which they have not yet been able to recover. Whether in the multitude of events, or for certain purpoſes, it is not yet known, but this ſervice, one of the moſt important, as well as critical and brilliant in the naval operations of the preſent war, has ſome how or other, fortuitouſly, or deſignedly, been almoſt winked out of ſight.

But

But it unqueſtionably proves, that a naval war was our proper line of action.

However, inſtead of purſuing a naval war with vigour againſt any of our enemies, notwithſtanding we are almoſt ſurrounded by them, our whole attention is ſtill taken up with the American war. The Miniſters are talking one way, and acting another.—One day they tell us it is to be a war of poſts.—Another day it is to be ſomething elſe, but they have no name for it.—Without pretending to the gift of prophecy, or to the having deeper penetration than any other man, I will venture to aſſert, that ſo long as the preſent Miniſters continue to hold their places, the American war will not be given up. It will be carried on, in ſome ſhape or other. The King's printer at New York, in his Royal Gazette of December 19, 1781, tells his readers, "*That they will not be deſerted by Great* "*Britain whilſt there is a barrel of powder* "*and a man in it, or money to procure them.*"

Even

Even this man, at three thouſand miles diſtance, could ſee the predilection and obſtinate adherence to the preſent ſyſtem. We at home ought to be convinced, that there is no alternative, but to make our reſolutions effectual, or expect public ruin. If we are negligent at this moment, ſome new trick, ſome freſh reaſon, will be found for carrying it on. Perhaps, Lord Dunmore will land *ſomewhere*; and this will furniſh a pretence for ſupporting his Lordſhip. General Waſhington, whoſe natural diſpoſition is reſerve and gravity, laughed very heartily for ſeveral minutes when Lord Cornwallis told him, after his Lordſhip was made priſoner, that Lord Dunmore was coming to reſume his government of Virginia. Mr. Waſhington, however, politely aſked his Lordſhip's pardon for behaving ſo rudely; but the abſurdity, he ſaid, was ſo great, he could not help it.

If the ſubject were not too ſerious and important for ridicule, I could fancy ſeeing

a painter of humour, ſketching the out-lines of a political print, repreſenting the French Miniſter at Philadelphia, handing to the Preſident of the Congreſs, a copy of Mr. Attorney-General's bill; the whole aſſembly in a fit of laughter; and the ſecretary entering upon the journals, the words of Lord Cornwallis's parole. But the magnitude of our misfortunes ſuppreſſes every ſenſation, except the inſupportable weight of them. We have appeared to the Congreſs in the characters of brutal tyrants, and abject ſupplicants. The national honour has been diſgraced by both theſe aſſumptions. The war on our part, has, in ſeveral inſtances, been conducted with a ferocity and cruelty that partook more of Savages than Britons. Of the errand of the Commiſſioners I will ſay nothing; perhaps the whole was a job; at leaſt I hope ſo, becauſe that is the beſt excuſe that can be made for it. But after ſuch experience; after knowing the *uti poſſidetis* of the Congreſs to treat; I hope never to ſee my country humbled

humbled in ſuch incapable hands, as to be laid again at the feet of America, to be kicked away like a foot-ball. There ſeems to me to be a ſafer mode, without committing the dignity of the country, or diſcloſing the *ultimatum* by a bill.

The firſt preliminary, is *ſincerity* in the Court without that all the reſt is futile and unſafe; and the way to know it, is to ſee a full, and *bona fide* diſcharge of the *Efficient Council*, and *official* Miniſters. While either of theſe remain, the ground is hazardous to ſtand upon. All may *ſeem* fair in the cloſet; Lord Chatham ſaid he thought he found it ſo. But Mr. Burke very juſtly ſays, " while the Miniſter of the day appears in all the pomp and pride of power, while they have all their canvas ſpread out to the wind, and every ſail filled with the fair and proſperous gale of royal favour, in a ſhort time they find, they know not how, a current, which ſets directly againſt them; which prevents all

progreſs; and even drives them backwards." To prevent a repetition of this duplicity, the Augean ſtable ought to be cleaned: though the offices were as foul as the ſtables of Augeas, neither the abilities of a Chatham, nor the ſtrength of a Hercules are requiſite to perform the taſk. Honeſty and reſolution are ſufficient. The garriſon who have kept their poſt, and the phalanx which covered them, are now fully known: neither the one nor the other will meet with reinforcements. Lord Southampton will be more circumſpect — his Lordſhip will be more cautious — his ſituation is delicate. His Lordſhip cannot be inſenſible, that when he lends himſelf to ſupport the meaſures of the cabal, or junto, he gives an appearance of the approbation of another Perſon. His Lordſhip has been convinced, that ſuch *ſeeming* is without authority — that it is expected the ſervants of that perſon will take no political part. There was a good deal of little cunning, in getting Lord Southampton to ſecond the

Addreſs,

Addreſs, on the firſt day of the ſeſſion. —It was taking a great liberty; but it was a choice manœuvre;—It was hanging out to the nation, the Prince of Wales's flag, in ſupport of the King's ſervants. Though the maſk conſiſted of only an old, flimſy Scotch gauze, Lord Southampton did not ſee through it. But there were thoſe of better diſcernment, who ſaw the artifice in attempting to mix the purity of the one, with the ——— of the other.

Parliament has entrenched upon the prerogative of the Junto, and the alarm is ſpread through all ranks of the ſubalterns. They ſay, "Parliament has nothing to do with the meaſures of government, that the line of parliamentary duty is contained every ſeſſion in the King's Speech." But they dare not hold this language in the Houſe of Commons. Lord North is there all ſubmiſſion. He ſays he will obey the voice of Parliament, though his own opinion is againſt it.

it. If he were any thing more than a *nominal* Miniſter, it would be ſaying, "I will act againſt my judgment, ſooner than give up my place—I will be reſponſible for meaſures, taken againſt my opinion, before I will reſign." If there can be ſuch a thing as ſuperiority in meanneſs, this noble Lord's language and conduct excel every idea of it. But the truth is, he is not Miniſter; and the reaſon of his behaving in this unaccountable manner is, he acts not from himſelf but from the Junto; who, in all their late trials, have not been able to get another of the ſame pliant, trifling, indolent habit, to put in his place, His Lordſhip ſtays by their orders, and he ſpeaks from their inſtructions.

The ſalvation of the country depends on the removal of the preſent Miniſters, not becauſe they have been unſucceſsful, but becauſe they are incapable of ſerving the country. They have not ability to extri-

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cate the nation out of the difficulties into which they have plunged it. Their want of capacity is their crime. In ordinary caſes and in ordinary men, the want of capacity cannot be charged as a crime; but when Miniſters, who are entruſted with all the higheſt and deareſt concerns of the people, ſhall, in ſpite of diſgrace and loſs of dominion, in ſpite of the voice of parliament, in ſpite of the voice of the people, obſtinately cling to their offices, as Sir George Savile humorouſly expreſſed it, firſt by one hand, and when that is cut off, then by another hand; and when that is cut off alſo, laſtly by their teeth, until their heads are cut off; ſuch conduct is a crime of the deepeſt dye and of the greateſt magnitude; becauſe it involves the ruin of millions and the ultimate loſs of the Empire. There can be nothing worſe, unleſs as Algernon Sydney ſays, "ſomething can be imagined that is "worſe than confuſion and deſtruction."

There

There is no alternative; the ſtate of the nation is reduced to this point; the Miniſters muſt be changed or the country is undone. They cannot carry on the war, they have given a thouſand proofs of it. They cannot make peace; even America, who as it is pretended, is the weakeſt of our enemies, holds their judgment in contempt, and ſays, their promiſes are not to be truſted. In conſequence of the laudable and truly patriotic efforts of General Conway, it is poſſible that they have ſent, or are on the point of ſending, "ſome puny enemy "or ſuſpicious friend," to ſound, as they wiſely call it, Mr. John Adams; to aſk whether he will treat. The meaſure is in agitation; if it is not taken. It is more humiliating and degrading than ſending Lord Carliſle and Meſſrs. Eden and Johnſtone to America. Adams muſt laugh in his ſlieve at the queſtion. He will affect an abundance of candour; he will declare that peace is the firſt wiſh of his heart, and the object of his embaſſy; that Dr. Franklin, it is true, was

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the Miniſter of War, and that he has *conducted* it (not by electricity) with great wiſdom and deſired ſucceſs; but that he (Adams) is the Miniſter of Peace, and that he cannot hope for a greater honour, than to have engraved on his tomb, "Here lies the man "who made the peace between the United "States of America and Great Britain, in "1782."

If there is a man, beſides the preſent Miniſters, who can be miſled by ſuch *general* declarations, he is not fit to be argued with; he is a proper object for St. Luke's. A treaty of general peace may be entered into; a full and adequate negociation may be opened; or if, at the worſt, it ſhould fail, the war may be carried on by men of ability, ſpirit, and character, who enjoy the confidence of their country, and are dreaded by the enemy.

Till the great end is obtained of an entire removal of the Interior and Official Cabinets, and the appointment of able Miniſters, armed with conſtitutional powers, the means by which alone they can be obtained, ought to continue, and which conſiſt in a *ſteady* and *determined* OPPOSITION.

March 12, 1782.

FINIS.

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